

2018 Stratford Town Meeting | MINUTES

Meeting date | time: 03/13/2018 | 10:00 am | Meeting location: Fuller Town Hall

Moderator	James Sayen	Select-Board:	Supervisors of the Checklist:
Town Clerk	Josiah Barnes	James Davis – Chair	Claire Martineau
Administrative Asst.	Suzanne Goulet	Clayton Macdonald	Lynette Emerson
Secretary	Bona Ladd	Charles Goulet	Wayne Labatte

Start Time | 10:00 am | Opening Announcements |

Discussion: James Sayen (Moderator) called Town Meeting to Order at 10:00 am. Moderator asks all to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance; Recognizes all Veterans for their service to our country and asks them to stand for recognition; Recognizes Town election officials for their dedication to the Town; Discusses the need for more people to become involved with Town Meeting and Elections both politically and as volunteers. Moderator opens and displays empty Ballot Box and then secures Ballot Box. Moderator explains the rules of the house regarding professional conduct and mutual respect during Town meeting dialogues.

Moderator moves to Warrant Articles.

WARRANT ARTICLES

Warrant Article 1

To choose by non-partisan ballot the following Officers: 1 Selectman (3 years); 1 Library Trustee (2 years); 1 Library Trustee (3 years); 1 Cemetery Trustee (1 year); 1 Cemetery Trustee (3 years); 1 Trustee of Trust Funds (3 years); 1 Supervisor of the Checklist (6 years); 1 Town Auditor (1 year); 1 Town Moderator (2 years).

Actions

Persons Recognized

Motions:	Wayne Hall Sr.
Seconds:	Clayton Macdonald
Discussion:	No public input. Moderator calls for vote.
Voting Method:	Verbal Yay or Nay
Results:	Article 1 Passes; No Nays.

Warrant Article 2

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$751,870** for the operating budget. This article does not include the cost of any other warrant article.

Actions	Persons Recognized
Motions:	James Davis
Seconds:	Clayton Macdonald
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tim Brooks questions Line Item 4210-4214 presenting that the budget was not reduced even though only a small portion was used the previous year. Clayton Macdonald responded with regards to the contract with the NH State Troopers and a need for contingency funds since the Town chose not to disband the Police Department during Town Meeting 2017 and that if a qualified person were to apply for the position at any time, the Town would need funds to pay for new police staff.• Claire Martineau questions as to where the unused Police Dept. funds go at the end of the year. Clayton Macdonald responds that they are then added to the Unassigned Fund Balance where excess funds are used, in part, to reduce the tax burden on the Town's tax payers for the following tax cycles.• Racheal O'Meara questions why the Town Clerk & Tax Collector's budget increased by ~\$25,000.00, Josiah Barnes (Town Clerk & Tax Collector) explains that in previous years, the TC/TC salary, Election Payroll portion of the budget was under "Executive" and NOT under its own budgeting. The TC/TC felt that it made more sense to have all things under the TC/TC's umbrella to be on the TC/TC Budget. This was not an increase in the TC/TC budget as it was reorganization of the Town Budget in general. Vicki Delalla, also responds that there are 2 elections in 2018 whereas there were 0 elections and only Town Meeting in 2017.• No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.
Voting Method:	Verbal Yay or Nay Results: Article 2 Passes; 1 Nay

Warrant Article 3

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$8,000** to be added to the previously established Fire Department Expendable Trust Fund, with the full amount to come from the unassigned fund balance. (Board Recommends)

Actions	Persons Recognized
Motions:	Charles Goulet
Seconds:	James Davis
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Charles Goulet informs the Town of the origination of the article, and municipal contracts with Maidstone, VT and Brunswick, VT.• No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.
Voting Method:	Verbal Yay or Nay Results: Article 3 Passes, No Nays

Warrant Article 4

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$25,000** to be added to the previously established Highway and Bridges Capital Reserve Fund. (Board Recommends)

Actions	Persons Recognized
Motions:	Clayton Macdonald
Seconds:	James Davis
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Clayton Macdonald discusses the establishment of the Article, current balance of \$99,022.00, and its necessity.No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.
Voting Method:	Verbal Yay or Nay Results: Article 4 Passes; No Nays

Warrant Article 5

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$10,000** to be added to the previously established Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund. (Board Recommends)

Actions	Persons Recognized
Motions:	Charlie Goulet
Seconds:	Clayton Macdonald
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Thomas Whelan asked for clarification of article, Select-Board responds.No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.
Voting Method:	Verbal Yay or Nay Results: Article 5 Passes; No Nays

Warrant Article 6

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$3,000** to be added to the previously established Recycling Capital Reserve Fund, with the full amount to come from the unassigned fund balance. (Board Recommends)

Actions	Persons Recognized
Motions:	James Davis
Seconds:	Wayne Hall Sr.
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">James Davis addresses Article 5 in relation to Article 6.No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.
Voting Method:	Verbal Yay or Nay Results: Article 6 Passes; No Nays.

Warrant Article 7

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$1,000** to be added to the previously established 250th Celebration Expendable Trust Fund for funding the 250th anniversary celebration to be held in 2023. (Board Recommends)

Actions **Persons Recognized**

Motions: Charles Goulet

Seconds: James Davis

Discussion:

- Charles Goulet Discusses the account balance of \$2529.00, anniversary will be in 2023, the need for more volunteers and community involvement, and the status of the project.
- No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.

Voting Method: Verbal Yay or Nay **Results:** Article 7 Passes; No Nays.

Warrant Article 8

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$5,000 to be added to the previously established Government Buildings Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund. (Board Recommends)

Actions **Persons Recognized**

Motions: Clayton Macdonald

Seconds: James Davis

Discussion:

- Clayton Macdonald discusses the account balance of **\$35,430.00**, established in 2014, and the reasoning for the article
- No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.

Voting Method: Verbal Yay or Nay **Results:** Article 8 Passes; No Nays

Warrant Article 9

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$5,000** to be added to the previously established Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund. (Board Recommends)

Actions

Persons Recognized

Motions:

Wayne Hall Sr.

Seconds:

Clayton Macdonald

Discussion:

- Clayton Macdonald discusses the Fund balance of \$10,085.00, age and issues of the current police cruiser and need for the article.
- Larry Ladd discusses the police cruiser and dept. regarding the balsams going forward and needing the ability to activate a police force for Stratford. Clayton responds in concurrence.
- Michael Brauer asks if the money is held in an interest-bearing account. Suzanne Goulet (Administrative Assistant to BOS) confirms that it is held in an interest-bearing account.
- Tim Brooks would rather have the money go to the active fire dept. and disagrees with holding out money for a non-active police dept.
- Vicki Delalla discusses how unexpended money goes to tax relief.
- Rachel O'Meara asks if the town is ever going to hire for the police department. Clayton responds that Select-Board needs more input from the town.
- James Davis brings up that we have had hearings on regarding the Police Dept and encourages more people to be involved in the hearing.
- Denis Corbeil asks how many hours per week that the state troopers patrol, James Davis responds 4 hours per week.
- Mark Mcculloch ask about the monthly pay to State Troopers.
- Claire suggests that police fund goes more towards state police to help increase their coverage in Stratford. Clayton responds.
- Marc Mcculloch discusses issues with Northern Pass and the Balsams Project; If there is any more news regarding The Balsams; and to give the police dept. another year before deciding.
- Charlie Goulet & James Davis discuss reasons for keeping the police budget.
- Chris Caron would like to have more hearings regarding the police dept.
- No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.

Voting Method: Verbal Yay or Nay **Results:** Article 9 Passes; 1 Nay

Warrant Article 10

Are you in favor of reducing the number of seats on the Stratford Planning Board from the current 7 members, which includes one ex officio member, to 5 members, which includes one ex officio member, pursuant to the provisions of RSA 673:2, II, (a) and RSA 673:5.

Actions	Persons Recognized
Motions:	Rachel O'Meara (Planning Board Chair)
Seconds:	Charles Goulet (Select-Board)
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rachel O'Meara discusses need to reduce number of board members.• Tom Whelan asks for clarification of the RSA's. Clayton reads the RSAs.• No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.
Voting Method:	Verbal Yay or Nay Results: Article 10 Passes; No Nays.

Warrant Article 11

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$250** for the Cohos Historical Society in support of the group's efforts and community events within the Town.

Actions	Persons Recognized
Motions:	Charles Goulet
Seconds:	Thomas Whelan
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tim Brooks asks to increase the amount to \$1000.00.• Thomas Whelan asks as to why only \$250. Wendy McMann responds that this is a token request to support the Historical Society with visibility. Wendy goes on to discuss the different projects the Historical Society has done for community and to show Town support when asking for grants. Thomas then asks if the increase in funds will go to good use, to which Wendy replied that it would.• Wayne Labatte also informs the Town the need for funds and grants to conduct maintenance and repairs to Marion Blodgett Museum.• No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.
AMENDMENT:	To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$1000.00 for the Cohos Historical Society in support of the group's efforts and community events within the Town.
	MOTIONS: Tim Brooks
	SECONDS: Wendy McMann (Town Treasurer)
	VOTING METHOD: Verbal Yay or Nay RESULTS: Amendment Passes; No Nays
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.
Voting Method:	Verbal Yay or Nay Results: Amended Article 11 Passes; No Nays

Warrant Article 12

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$5,995** in donations to the following groups: **\$115**, Northwoods Home Health & Hospice; **\$115**, Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital; **\$115**, Northern Human Services; **\$1,600**, Tri-County CAP (fuel assistance); **\$2,900**, Tri-County CAP Senior Meals (meals on wheels); **\$115**, Tri-County CAP North Country Transit (bus service); **\$115**, Child Advocacy Center of

Coos County; **\$115**, CASA; **\$115**, Backpack Program; **\$115**, Service Link; **\$115**, Helping Hands; **\$115**, Colebrook Area Food Pantry; **\$115**, American Red Cross; **\$115**, Tyler Blain (homeless shelter); **\$115** Stratford Old Home Day, Inc.

Actions	Persons Recognized
Motions:	James Davis
Seconds:	Clayton Macdonald
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">James Davis addresses why the donations are limited to a total of ~ \$6000.00.No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.
Voting Method:	Verbal Yay or Nay Results: Article 12 Passes; 1 Nay.

Warrant Article 13

Shall we allow the operation of keno games within the Town? (Insert as petition)

Actions	Persons Recognized
Motions:	Wayne Hall Sr.
Seconds:	Charles Goulet
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Thomas Whelan asked if there is an income stream from the Keno. Larry Ladd states that the money goes to State and to the Kindergarten Program. Wayne Hall says that a part of the revenue comes back to the town for the schools Kindergarten classes.Mark Mcculloch wants to know who asked for this to which Wayne Hall Sr. responds that it was the Backroom Tavern. Mark also voices his support of the for this article since it does support our educational system just as the proceeds from the Liquor Commission does.Joe Skillen discusses how this would be a gateway for gambling in Stratford. He is concerned that this will be another temptation for people to lose their money gambling and that people in our region are already too poor to afford this.Rachel O'Meara addresses her concerns against the Keno Program stating that Concord should be putting more money towards education rather than receiving funds from gambling.Vicki Delalla asks for clarification as to what Keno is. Wayne Hall Sr. explains Keno. Mr. Hall goes on to explain why Keno can be a benefit and explains why Alarice Scott (Keno Sponsor) was unable to attend Town MeetingLaws regarding where Keno may be dispensed and/or played are clarified.Christopher Caron voices that since there has been no representation from the sponsors of the warrant article, no information is present, and without any hearings on the mater, that this article should be voted down.Robert Maxwell (Colebrook News & Sentinel) states that our kindergarten program will receive the funding whether this article is approved or not.Michael Brauer brings into question whether 14 signatures is legal to allow for Warrant Article 13.<ul style="list-style-type: none">Moderator calls for recess for the town to verify, by RSAs, if there are enough legal signatures to allow for Warrant Article 13.Moderator calls Town Meeting to Resume Order

- Select-Board’s office contacted Secretary of State’s office for clarification. Secretary of State’s office states that Stratford needs a minimum of 10 signatures for a Petition to be accepted as a Warrant Article.
- No further public input. Moderator calls for vote.

Voting method: Verbal Yay or Nay **Results:** Moderator declares Article 13 fails to pass.

Warrant Article 14

To transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting and to hear reports from any agents or committees heretofore chosen.

Actions	Persons Recognized
<p>Motions:</p> <p>Seconds:</p> <p>Discussion:</p>	<p>James Davis</p> <p>Clayton Macdonald</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James Davis discusses the 911 Signs; Colebrook Dispatch; Parking issues in the Common; Stratford’s upcoming 250th Anniversary. • Clayton Macdonald Discusses the need for a new roof for the Town Hall; The Pavilion Project. Wayne Hall Sr. asks for the specific location of the new pavilion and Clayton describes new location. Moderator also informs the Town of Fantastic Fridays being moved to Saturdays as “Saturdays in the Common”. • Claire Martineau inquires as to how much of the Unassigned Fund Balance went to relieve tax burden on residents. Select-board states \$75,000.00 was used. • Suzanne Goulet further explains the Unassigned Fund Balance was \$325,388.00. State wants municipalities to retain 10% of revenue. For Stratford that would be \$220,699.00. \$75,000.00 was used to reduce taxes. • Denis Corbeil inquires as to where the accepted bid was posted as per RSAs. Clayton Macdonald responds stating that the accepted bid was \$325,000.00 • Claire Martineau Motions to Adjourn. • Wayne Hall Sr. Seconds
<p>Voting Method: Verbal Yay or nay Results: Town Meeting Adjourns.</p>	



D. Josiah Barnes
Town Clerk & Tax Collector

May 5th, 2018

Date